

Creating & Viewing eBooks and Story Books for iPad

Dan Herlihy

Creating an eBook

There are many approaches to creating an “eBook.” You can create a book in a word processing program such as Open Office or Microsoft Word, add images and text then save it as a PDF file. Some of the eBook readers listed below allow you to import the file into them. Some will read the text aloud, some only allow you to view it, while others can play back sound or video files embedded into a PDF document, which can be done using Adobe Acrobat Professional.

You can also create a book in a word processing program, save it either as a (Word) doc or PDF file, and then convert it to an epub format book using free online tools such as those found at www.epubbud.com. The epubbud site allows you to import your files, convert them, and then allows you to download them in various formats for the Nook, iPad/iPod, and other devices. You can also upload and embed sound files onto any of the pages before converting and saving as an epub format book.

If you first save your file as a PDF before converting it to an epub file, the page size, the position and format of text and images on the pages will be maintained when opened in the various readers. When converting a Word doc to an epub eBook, depending on the “eReader” that you open it in, images may get repositioned, text may be forced onto the next page and the formatting may change.

Not all eReaders are alike, and unfortunately while text on a page of an epub book that was created from a word processing file may look sharper on the device you are viewing it on, versus that from a converted PDF document, the page integrity may not have held, and the text and images that were originally on one page may end up getting split over two pages.

iPad Apps for Creating eBooks

These apps for the iPad allow you to create eBooks right on the iPad, then import them into an eBook reader on your iPad such as iBooks, or export them as a PDF file to open in other readers such as vBookz PDF, vBookz, Goodreader, ReaddleDocs and other PDF readers.

- **eBook Magic** (3.99) create epub and PDF books – export to email or iTunes. This app is one of the best apps to create eBooks in both epub and PDF format. Very easy to use, import images, add text, many different page layouts to choose from. Add pages, then save and export. Books look great when opened in iBooks and other book readers.
- **Book Creator for iPad** – (4.99 on sale – 6.99) – record sound, import images, add text, import music from iTunes library, export to iBooks from app. Books look great and sound files can play when opened in iBooks.
- **iBookcreator** (3.99) – import images, video clips, add text, export to iBooks, PDF readers, Free Books and other apps.

- **StoryPatch** (2.99) – import images, use programs clip art, add text, export book as PDF file or read in program.
- **My Story** – Story Creator for Kids - (1.99) – draw, record narration, add text to create books, can export directly to iBooks where recorded sound files will play. Also open in SpeakText for eBook where text can be read aloud.
- **Picturebook** (free) add images, text, export to eMail as PDF
- **Scribble Press** (free) – import images, add text, adds page numbers as you go, can export directly to iBooks where text can be selected and read aloud. Does a good job with page formatting.

Other writing apps:

- **Pictello** (18.99) – create picture books with text and audio recordings, export as PDF to iTunes or email.
- **StoryKit** (free) – can export books to computer to print, record sound, import your own images, draw
- **SonicPics** (2.99) – import images, record sound, creates self running slideshow, can export as movie
- **Story Robe** – (.99) talking movie story book similar to SonicPics

Pages – (\$20.00) – app for Macintosh computers can export files as ePub for iBooks

iBooks Author

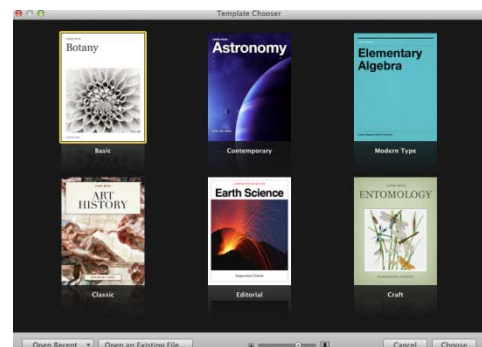
Free from Mac Apps store – <http://www.apple.com/mac/> - application for Mac Computers (requires Lion OS) to create interactive eBooks.

iBooks Author can:

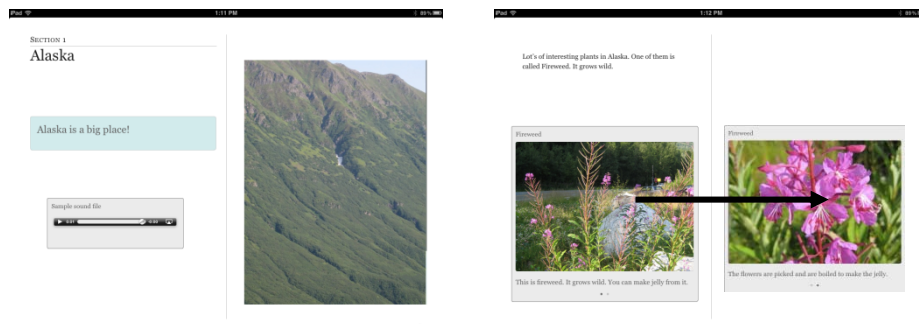
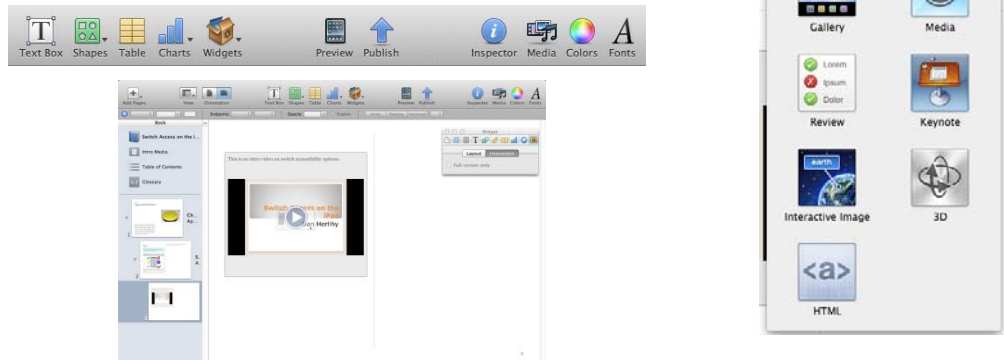
- Import video, images, sound files, music, text – can drag and drop in images and text into program
- Add tables, charts
- Add interactive “Widgets” containing HTML, media, Keynote presentations, 3D images, chapter reviews, add shapes, arrows,
- Set page orientation, colors, etc.

Export to: iBooks (for iPad), PDF, Text file

Start by choosing a layout template – or you can start with a blank page.



Add items such as text, video, images or interactive widgets which can contain multiple images for example in one scrolling window on the page.



Shown above are sample pages. The page on the left contains a sound file that was imported. The page on the right contains an interactive “widget” – an image box that you can drag and drop multiple images into. Swiping or using arrow keys in the widget scroll from image to image within the window.

Creating a Switch Accessible eBook for iPad

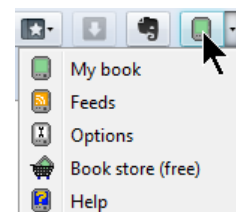
“Scene & Heard” and “Tap Speak Sequence” (found on the iTunes app store) are both switch accessible apps for the iPad. Using them you can create a switch accessible book with recorded sound, images and text. Scene & Heard can also import and play video.

To create a book using Tap Speak Sequence the pages must be an image that you can import into the program. Using a screen capture utility it is easy to create the pages in a word processing program, then capture the page as a jpeg image. Import the captured page “images” into the iPhoto library on the iPad. There you will be able to access them when creating what is referred to as a New Sequence – a sequence of pages or scenes – in Tap Speak Sequence. Documentation and directions can be found at <http://conleysolutions.com/wordpress/> on working with images.

With Scene & Heard you can create a sequence of pages, add or record sound files, import images, or use the camera in the iPad 2 to take pictures. You can also import video and have text or symbols displayed on each page. You assemble the pages as scenes which you link together, by starting with a new scene, importing an image, give the page a name, adding the scene (page) actions such as playing a sound, displaying text, etc. saving, creating a new scene. Pages are then linked together by creating a hotspot on the page that links to the next page.

Creating an epub Book from Web Pages

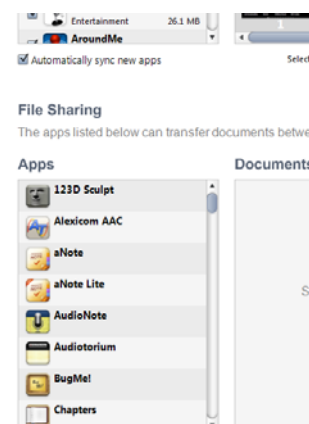
A free Firefox extension called GrabMyBooks allows you to “grab” web pages and convert them to epub format on the fly. The GrabMyBooks extension is added to the Firefox toolbar where you choose the “My book” icon to access the menu – choosing “My book” to capture the web page. <http://www.grabmybooks.com/> These pages can be imported onto the Nook.



Sharing and Viewing eBooks

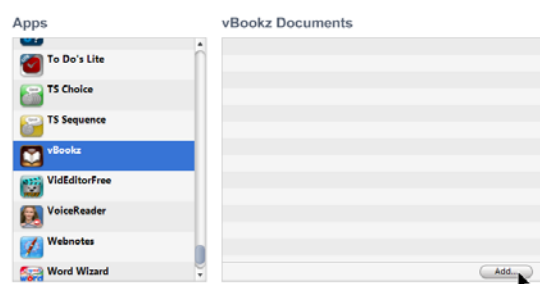
Shown here is a view of the listing of programs on my iPad that can import or export PDF, epub, Daisy or TXT books. To import your own book onto an iPad or iPod, into an app that supports the file format that you have created it in, first sync the device to your computer. Make sure your device is selected on the left side menu in iTunes under the Device section.

Select the Apps menu at the top of the screen. Using the right scroll bar, scroll down to the bottom of the page until you see the File Sharing list of apps.



Select the app from the list that you wish to import a book into. Choose the Add button, search your computer for the file and click Open to import it into the list.

Sync your device. The file should now be in the program.

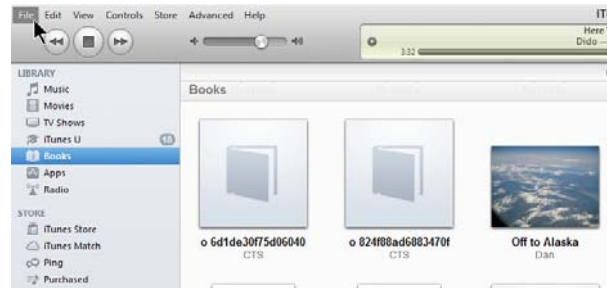


To import an eBook into iBooks

iBooks can import PDF and ePub files into the iBooks bookshelf on the iPad. When importing PDF files text cannot be selected and spoken (read aloud) as the text on the page is viewed more as an image then text by the program. eBooks created with iBooks Author can be exported then imported into iBooks via the process described in the following paragraph. eBooks created with iBook Creator, Book Creator, Scribble Press

or eBook Magic on the iPad can be exported from those apps directly into iBooks, and the text can be selected for playback.

To import a PDF or epub file into iBook open iTunes, choose Books from the menu on the upper left, choose File, Add File to Library, search for the PDF file and choose Open. This will import the file into the Books section. When you sync your device with the computer the book will be imported into iBooks.



Readers, eBook Readers and Story Creation apps

A reader or eBook Reader is basically a program that can open and display your file or book. Some have text to speech capability, some cannot display images, some can open PDF files, while others can only open specific file formats.

As you create your own books and open them in various readers you will notice a big discrepancy in how the book looks from program to program. Some programs will keep intact the formatting of each page, while opening up the same book in another program might display the first 30 lines of the text on page 1, then display the rest of the text on the next page completely altering the formatting. Nothing you did wrong, just how that particular program handles the file format that you had saved the book in!

eBook and PDF Readers

iBooks (free) – eBook viewer, will play audio that you have embedded when creating/converting the ePub file format ebooks, can import ebooks by adding books through iTunes menus when connected to computer or Dropbox, can select text in ePub format books to be read aloud.

Perfect Reader (free) – imports your own or downloaded PDF files. Reads text aloud but in reading mode strips out images. Voice is not a high quality voice.

vBookz (2.99) – can import your own ePub eBooks that are text based only – does not import images, ability to change font size, background, text color, reads aloud with high quality Acapela voice – male or female, adjust reading speed, does not play embedded audio.

vBookz PDF (4.99) – import and reads aloud PDF files highlighting word by word, choose male or female voice

ezPDFReader (2.99) – opens PDF files and can playback sound files that have been embedded using Adobe Acrobat Professional, books can contain images, forms, video, audio, does not import ePub format books.

Stanza (free) – eBook viewer – view ePub files, PDF files, no reading voices, doesn't play embedded sound files. ePub books created from websites using GrabMyBooks look great. <http://www.grabmybooks.com/>

Bookster (free) – free children's books that read aloud – students can record themselves reading the text.

Free Books (free) – download over 24,000 public domain books in text format and audio books as well. Ability to import your own ebooks (epub) stored on a Dropbox account from within the program, books do not read aloud but you are able to change the font size to adjust formatting. Imports epub books created using GrabMyBooks.

DocStorm (free) – can open PDF, TXT and epub files, does not playback sound files embedded by Adobe Acrobat Professional. It can play back sound files embedded when creating an epub book with epubub, but when doing this the page size becomes smaller and you cannot resize page. Open website pages that have been downloaded as an epub book using the free Firefox extension GrabMyBooks.

Read2Go – (19.99) Daisy formatted books (can't contain images), reads text highlighting word by word, downloaded Bookshare books (need subscription) and also books downloaded into the program from public domain sites such as Project Gutenberg. Can only import your own books that are in Daisy format.

Voice Reader Text to Speech (1.99) reads aloud PDF files, if images are in document strips out any images and formatting from the file when reading, excellent voice. I would create text only PDF versions of free eBooks and open in here to have read. Device must be connected to the internet for it to read aloud as it creates sound files on the fly.

SpeakText for eBook (free or 16.99 w/out ads) – reads text highlighting sentence at a time. Plays back sound files embedded) on the page using Book Creator for the iPad app by choosing the speaker icon of that the sound file. Import PDF, HTML, epub formats via File Sharing/Apps in iTunes – add files to App.

eBook Reader (free) – download free classics

GoodReader – Opens eBooks saved as PDF, does not play audio files.

Kindle – requires Amazon account, read purchased Kindle books

Nook for iPad – requires a Barnes and Noble Account – more than 500,000 free books

Audiobooks (free) – download and listen to over 3,5000 free Project Gutenberg audio books.

Other Solutions & Options

Adobe Acrobat Reader – the free Adobe Acrobat Reader for Mac & PC will read aloud text in a PDF document by choosing the View menu, Read Out Loud, then choose Activate Read Out Loud. You can choose which installed voice on your computer to use for reading.

Read and Write Web App www.texthelp.com – reads files, highlighting word by word, that can be opened in a web browser on the iPad.

Converting a PDF to MOBI format for Kindle - <http://www.pdfkindle.com/>

Importing any eBook onto a Kindle – converting from epub to MOBI format
<http://www.thehowtosource.com/2011/07/09/put-any-ebook-onto-your-kindle/>

Saving web pages as an epub file which can be opened in many of the readers listed above as well as importing onto a Nook. <http://www.grabmybooks.com/> - free Firefox browser extension.

Higher end eBook creation for iPad online – 1.99 per book <http://www.blurb.com/>

Free online eBook converter – convert PDF files to multiple book formats
<http://ebook.online-convert.com/convert-to-epub>

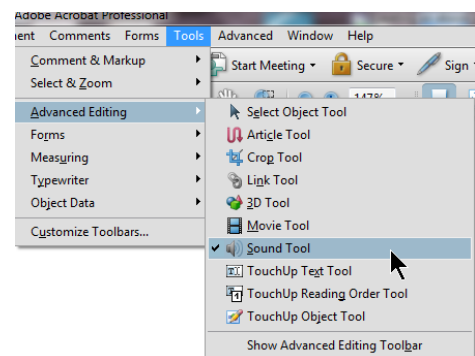
eBook Reader Name	Read Text	Play Audio	Play Video	File formats Accepted
iBooks	X	X	X	iBooks Author, ePub, PDF
Perfect Reader	X			PDF
vBookz	X			PDF
vBookz PDF	X			PDF
ezPDFReader		X		PDF
Stanza				ePub, PDF
Bookster		X		downloads
Free Books		X		downloads
DocStorm		X		PDF, TXT, ePub
Read2Go	X			Daisy
Voice Reader Text to Speech	X			TXT, PDF
SpeakText for eBook	X			PDF, HTML, ePub
eBook Reader				ePub
GoodReader				PDF
Audiobooks		X		downloads

Creating an ebook Using Adobe Acrobat Professional to Attach Sound Files to Text

Dan Herlihy

1. Create the file in a word processing program such as MS Word.
 - a. Add images, layout the pages
2. Save the file as a PDF file.
3. Using a sound recording application such as Audacity (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>) record and save MP3 or WAV files for each block of text.
 - a. This can be for each line, a sentence if it is isolated on the page as opposed to inside a paragraph, or a paragraph.

4. Open the PDF file created in Acrobat Professional.
5. Choose the Tools menu, Advanced Editing, Sound Tool.



6. Draw a box around, or to the left of the text that you wish to attach a sound file to.

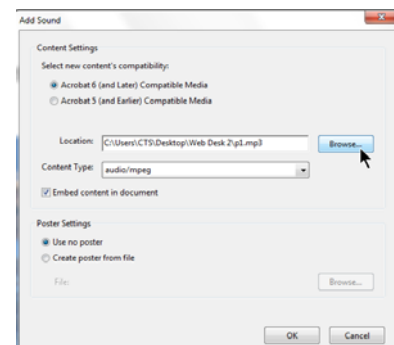


Snow came early

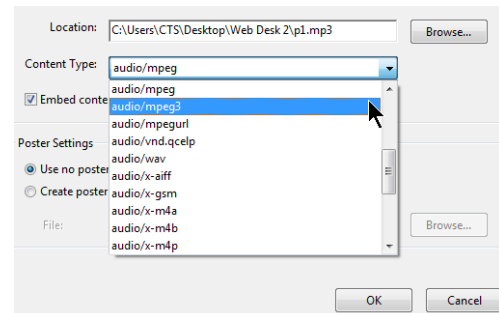
Snow came early this year to our town! The first snow was on Oct. 27th. Along with it came the winter cold!

Which you choose to do depends on the reader you will use. For example the ezPDF Reader iPad app will display a sound icon in the box you create to the left. Taping it will open the sound playback bar. For other readers drawing a box around the text might better indicate for the user that tapping it would play back sound.


7. In the window that opens after drawing the box choose the Browse button, search your computer, select your recorded sound file and click Select.



8. In the drop down menu next to Content Type choose the type of file you have attached, click OK.

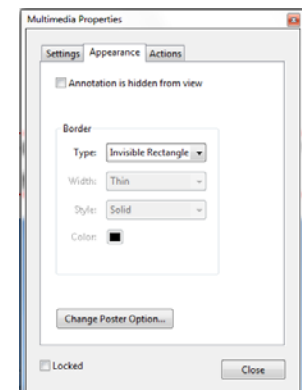


9. The red border in the two images below shows that the file has been attached to the document. Double clicking on it will play the file.

 Snow came early

Snow came early this year to our town! The first snow was on Oct. 27th. Along with it came the winter cold!

10. To hide the border around the text choose the Select Object Tool from the Tools menu and double click on the text you have attached the sound file to. The Multimedia Properties window opens. Choose the Appearance tab and in the Border drop down list choose Invisible Rectangle, click Close.



11. When you save the file there will not be a visible border around the text cueing that there is a sound file attached, but the sound file will play when the text is double clicked on.

Snow came early this year to our town! The first snow was on Oct. 27th. Along with it came the winter cold!

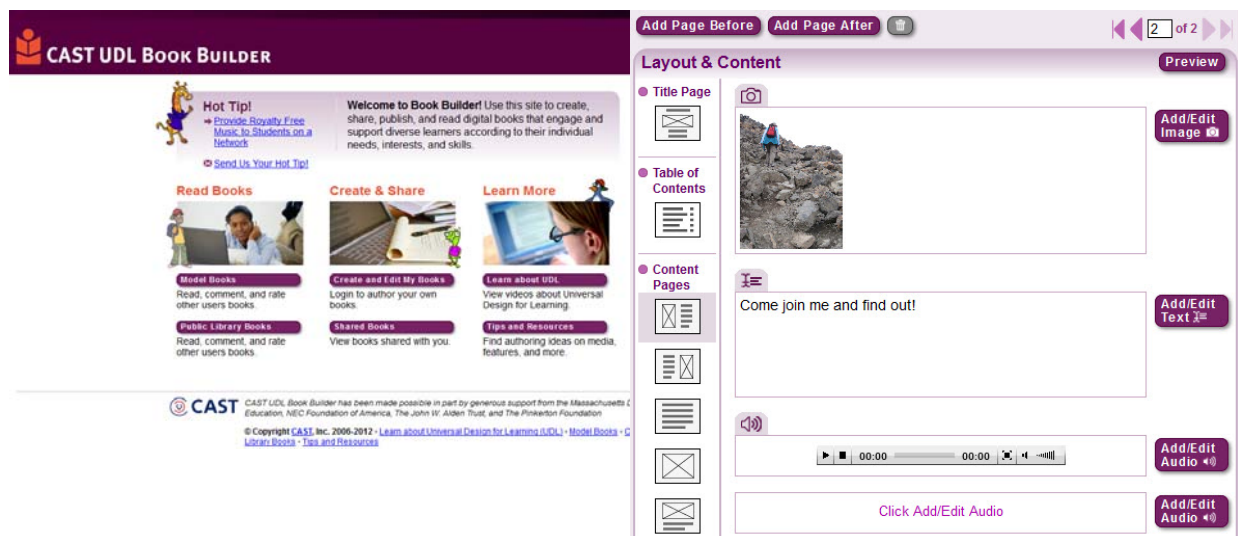
This file could now be opened in the free version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on a Mac or PC. The sound files will play when the text is double clicked on. If you import the file into an iPad app such as “**ezPDF Reader for iPad**” (\$2.99) the embedded sound files will play when tapped on.

Using CAST Book Builder

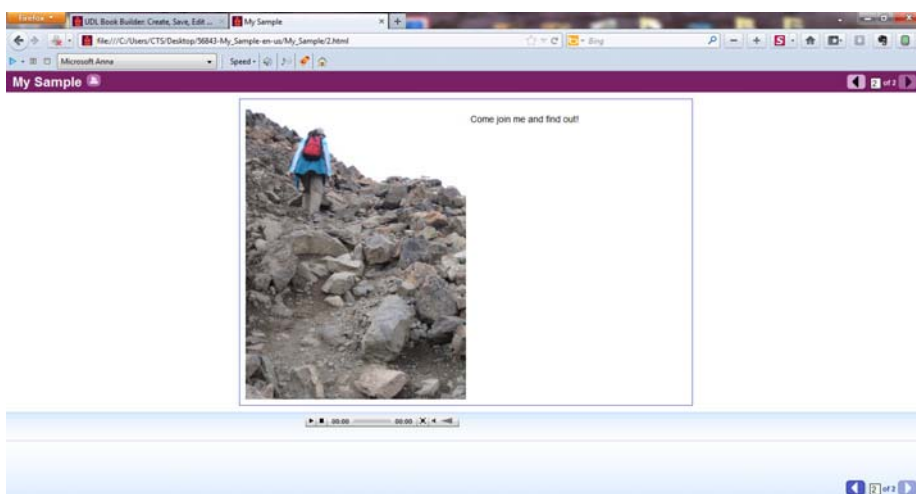
[Http://bookbuilder.cast.org](http://bookbuilder.cast.org)

The CAST Book Builder is a free online program that allows you to create eBooks that can be accessed on the web, downloaded and opened on a computer in a web browser – you are not required to be online as the browser is only opening the file – printed, and also saved as a PDF file from your web browser. PDF files can be imported into iBooks on an iPad.

You can import images, text import or record sound files. Books download as a HTML file or printed. Books containing images and sound cannot be created from an iPad, but text can be added and finished on a computer later.



Add images, text, import or record audio.



View online or download and open in any web browser.

Recorded or imported sounds will play.

Use Tab and Enter commands for switch access.